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ABSTRACT

Based on the novel "Growing Up Guilty," this learning activity packet contains objectives for increasing students' vocabulary and their understanding of various concepts in the book. The paper also lists procedures to be followed, library research assignments to help students understand the time period in which the characters lived, and nine detailed group activities. (EL)

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LAP for Growing Up Guilty by Sheila Schwartz, Pantheon

OBJECTIVES:

1. To learn the new vocabulary in this book.
2. To understand the characters in this book.
3. To understand Susan's family.
4. To learn about the main events in this book, especially about Susan's experiences at camp.
5. To understand Susan's relationship with her mother.
6. To understand Susan's relationship with Millie Reiner.
7. To understand the values in this book.
8. To understand the differences between the three families in this book.
9. To understand the meaning of love and death in this novel.
10. To understand Susan's path to maturity.
11. To understand the political figures and events of this pre-World War II period.

PROCEDURES:

1. All of the reading of this book is to be done at home before beginning the LAP in school.
2. All class work on the LAP will be done in groups. These groups will remain the same during the two weeks that we spend on the LAP. The names of group members are posted on the blackboard.
3. The vocabulary work at the beginning of the LAP will be done at home. This will not be graded.
4. All other individual work for grading will be done at home.
5. Your total grade for this LAP will be based on completion of group work plus your individual assignments.
6. Each group is assigned to a research topic to be worked on for two or more periods in the school library before we begin this LAP in class. You will do your research in the same groups in which you work in class. Your reports on this library research will be duplicated and presented in class on the first day of work.

LIBRARY RESEARCH ASSIGNMENTS:

To fully understand the characters in this book it is necessary to be aware of the times they lived in. The research topics below are mentioned in the book. Your research will help the class understand them fully. You should have at least 1000 words (four pages) on your topic:

Group I: What are: "The Young Communists League" (YCL) and The Communist International
Group II: Who were Earl Browder and Mother Bloor?
Group III: What was the I.W.W. (The Wobblies) and what is the story of Tom Mooney?
Group IV: Who were Sacco and Vanzetti?
Group V: Who was Woody Gutherie?
Group VI: What was the Lincoln Brigade?
Group VII: Who was John Dos Passos?
Group VIII: The Spanish Civil War?
Group IX: Who was Clarence Darrow?
Group X: Who was Emma Goldman?

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ACTIVITY I; Do the words listed below before you begin to read the book at home. First write, next to the word, what you think its meaning is from its context. Then look it up in the dictionary. Lastly, write a new sentence using this word.

1. sporadic (p. 55)_____
   Dict. Def._____
   New Sent._____
2. vicarious (p. 68)_____
   Dict. Def._____
   New Sent._____
3. antagonize (p. 68)_____
   Dict. Def._____
   New Sent._____
4. sanctimonious (p. 91)_____
   Dict. Def._____
   New Sent._____
5. mitigate (p. 99)_____
   Dict. Def._____
   New Sent._____
6. perplexed (p. 101)_____
   Dict. Def._____
   New Sent._____
7. emulate (p. 105)_____
   Dict. Def._____
   New Sent._____
8. atone (p. 107)_____
   Dict. Def._____
   New Sent._____
9. implicit (p. 108)_____
   Dict. Def._____
   New Sent._____
10. voraciously (p. 108)_____
    Dict. Def._____
    New Sent._____
11. bourgeois (p. 122)_____
    Dict. Def._____
    New Sent._____
12. affront (p. 125)_____
    Dict. Def._____
    New Sent._____
13. epitomized (p. 152)_____
    Dict. Def._____
    New Sent._____
14. sumptuous (p. 171)_____
    Dict. Def._____
    New Sent._____
15. distraught (p. 175)_____
    Dict. Def._____
    New Sent._____

ACTIVITY II: Group Work in Class
In this novel we get to know Susan and her family. Using the following questions and quotations, describe each member of Susan's family.

1. "Disappointed!...Who isn't disappointed? You think I'm not disappointed? Where is it written that life is a picnic? Being disappointed should prepare them for life."--Mrs. Green.

   What does this quotation tell us about Mrs. Green?_____
   _____
   _____

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2. Find another instance in the book where something Mrs. Green says reveals her character. Write it down using quotation marks. Explain what it tells hhe reader about her character.

QUOTATION: _____

EXPLANATION: _____

3. Susan describes her father as a fairweather friend. What is a fairweather friend? _____

4. Explain why you agree or disagree with Susan in this description of her father.

5. Describe Susan's brother Lewis. _____

6. Describe Susan's sister, Laura. _____

7. Describe Susan's Grandmother. _____

8. On pages eight and nine, Susan describes herself. What are some of the positive traits she mentions? _____

What are some of her negative traits that she mentions? _____

Describe Susan and then add your opinion of her. _____

ACTIVITY III: SUSAN AT CAMP. Do this in groups in the classroom.

1. Why doesn't Susan want to go to camp? _____

2. Describe Susan's first day at camp. _____

3. Susan is an outsider at camp. Why is she not accepted? _____

4. When Susan threatens to commit suicide, how do the other campers react? _____

5. Mrs. Crossman solves the mystery of the solen food and orders Susan out of the bathroom. Describe why you think she is or is not a good camp director.

6. What might Mrs. Crossman have done instead?

7. Describe Helen's treatment of Susan.

8. Why does Helen act this way?

9. What happens to change Susan's status with the group?

10. When Susan leaves the camp, Mrs. Crossman says, "You have betrayed the high ideals of Camp Olympic and greatly disappointed me." What were the "high ideals" of Camp Olympic?

11. But how had Camp Olympic let Susan down?

12. How had Mrs. Crossman let Susan down?

Individual Homework to be graded

1. Write a vignette (prose piece or poem) of at least 250 words on the topic, "What it is to be an outsider."

OR

2. Susan is miserable after the stealing incident. She says, "I knew life wasn't supposed to be like this, but I don't know how to make things different." Write a letter to Susan as a friend and advise her on what to do.

ACTIVITY IV: To be done in groups in class.
Pretend that you are running a camp for teenagers. List the following:

1. Five rules for the camp.

2. Five values for the camp.

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3. **Five daily activities for the camp.**_____

4. Five things from Susan's camp that you would change._____

5. Anything from Susan's camp that you would retain?_____

ACTIVITY V:

1. Mrs. Green is called to camp because Susan has said an objectionable word. She tells Susan: "This is such a beautiful place. I wish someone would send me to the country. All my life I wanted to go to a place like this". What emotion is Mrs. Green hoping Susan will feel when she says this?_____

2. What is the meaning of "ironic"?_____

3. "So who's happy? Do you think I'm happy? You weren't happy at home either. You make a career out of being unhappy".--Mrs. Green. What is ironic about this statement?_____

4. What does Susan think of her mother's folk wisdom?_____

5. Find an example of folk wisdom in this novel. Write it down._____

6. Give an example of folk wisdom that you have heard._____

7. What is your opinion of the value of believing in these time-worn ideas?_____

8. "There must be something wrong with you if you are the only one who is out of step."--Mrs. Green. Describe why you agree or why you do not agree with her reasoning._____

9. Mrs. Green says, "You should be ashamed." Susan replies, "I am, Mother. You've really succeeded in that". Explain how this statement reflects Susan's relationship with her mother._____

ACTIVITY VI:
Susan finds a very different relationship with Millie Reiner.

1. Describe Millie's physical appearance._____

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2. What does her appearance tell us about her character?_____

3. Susan says, "Millie was the first grown woman who had ever been honest with me." What are some of the topics that Millie felt free to discuss with Susan?_____

4. Many adults avoid these topics when talking to teenagers. Why?_____

5. What does Millie value?_____

6. How do Millie's values differ from what Mrs. Green considers important?_____

Final Individual Projects (These will be individually graded).
Begin to think about these now. Hand them in at the completion of the LAP. Each paper should be a minimum of 250 words, but, of course, you are free to write many more. Attach these to your LAP. Neatness, spelling, and punctuation are important. Select two of the below assignments.

1. Describe what you learned from this book.
2. Discuss whether or not you think this is a good book and why.
3. Growing Up Guilty tells the story of a girl growing up in the late 1930's. Trace Susan's journey to maturity. How has she changed by the end of the story? In what ways has she remained the same? Be sure to refer to her relationship with her parents, Sol, and her feelings about herself.

ACTIVITY VII: To be done in groups in class.
In this story, we meet three families. Each is from a very different socio-economic background.

1. What social class did Susan's family belong to?_____

   What does Susan value?_____

   How do the values of her parents reflect this group?_____

2. What is the socioeconomic background of Sol's family?_____

   How do their political values reflect their social class?_____

3. What is the socioeconomic background of Vern's family?_____

4. How is Vern like his parents?_____

5. How is Sol like his mother?_____

ACTIVITY VIII: Groups in Class.
In this novel, Susan has her first experience with love, sexual awakening and death. How does she respond to these experiences and what does she learn from them?

1. Describe an instance of Susan's learning to love a person outside of her family.

2. Why is it important to form close relationships with people outside of your family?

3. In this novel, Susan has three experiences with human sexuality. Describe each of these experiences and Susan's feelings about each.

   Vern

   Sol

   Her uncle

4. Death is another life experience that Susan must face. Describe Susan's feelings when Millie dies.

5. Describe Susan's feelings when Lewis dies.

ACTIVITY IX: Final Group Activity. At the end of this, hand in your LAPs and your three individual assignments.

1. List all the ways Susan has changed by the end of the book.

2. If you think her mother has changed, explain in what ways.

3. What will happen after the book? Will Susan marry Sol? Will they have a happy life together. Invent a future picture with your group.

4. List on the rest of this page (use the back if necessary), all the historical and political ideas you have gained from this book.

5. The theme of a book describes its central idea. A book can have one or more themes. List the theme(s) of this book.